

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PEKING 00764 210752Z
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-08 COME-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01 PM-05
NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00
PA-01 USIA-06 GSA-02 OES-07 INT-05 /080 W
-----068646 210759Z /21

R 210734Z MAR 78
FM USLO PEKING
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0188
INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 0764

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ETRD CH AS
SUBJ: AUSTRALIAN IRON ORE SALES TO CHINA

1. AUSTRALIAN COMMERCIAL COUNSELOR TOLD USLO ON MARCH 17
THAT TWO AUSTRALIAN COMPANIES HAD CONTRACTED TO EXPORT
3.1 MILLION TONS OF IRON ORE TO THE PRC DURING
CALENDAR YEAR 1978.

2. COMMENT: THIS APPEARS TO BE ABOUT A DOUBLING OF
AUSTRALIAN IRON ORE EXPORTS COMPARED WITH 1977. THE
VALUE IS ESTIMATED AT ABOUT US\$30 MILLION. LARGE
INCREASES IN IMPORTS OF HIGH-GRADE IRON ORE HAVE BEEN
EXPECTED IN VIEW OF THE ONGOING RECOVERY OF THE PRC'S
STEEL INDUSTRY, THE CURRENT STRESS ON HIGHER PRODUCT
QUALITY AND THE OLD PROBLEM OF LOW-QUALITY DOMESTIC
ORES. AUSTRALIA BELIEVES, WE THINK RIGHTLY, THAT ITS
IRON ORE EXPORTS WILL CONTINUE TO INCREASE RAPIDLY.
TO SOME EXTENT AUSTRALIA'S GOOD FORTUNE MAY ALSO BE
LINKED WITH THE INABILITY OF THE PRC'S OTHER HISTORICAL
SUPPLIER OF IRON ORE, NORTH KOREA, TO MEET ITS COMMITMENTS.
WOODCOCK

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: IRON, SALES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978PEKING00764
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780123-1260
Format: TEL
From: PEKING
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780342/aaaabjz.tel
Line Count: 55
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: d33361c0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 11 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3255384
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AUSTRALIAN IRON ORE SALES TO CHINA
TAGS: ETRD, CH, AS
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/d33361c0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014